

REMARKS

I. Status of Claims

Upon entry of the Amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 1-24 will be pending in the application.

Claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-8, 10-14, 17 and 20 are amended. Support for the amendment of claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-8, 10-14 can be found at least at the paragraph bridging pages 17 and 18 of the present specification. Support for the amendments of claims 17 and 20 can be found at least at page 37, lines 26-29. Furthermore, claims 4, 7 and 10 are re-phrased to more clearly recite the subject matter Applicants claim as the invention.

Claims 21-24 are added. Support for the new claims can be found at least at page 3, lines 3-5 of the present specification.

No new matter is added.

II. Rejoinder of Claims

Applicants respectfully request rejoinder of claims 1-7, 11-13, 15-16 and 18-19. Claims 1-7, 11-13, 15-16 and 18-19 were originally withdrawn due to Applicants' election of Group III, claims 8-10, 14, 17 and 20, in a Response to Restriction Requirement filed on March 13, 2008.

Applicants respectfully submit that upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1-24 will be linked so as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

III. Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8-10, 14, 17 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, bases for the rejections of claims 8, 17 and 20 is set forth in the Office Action dated May 1, 2008.

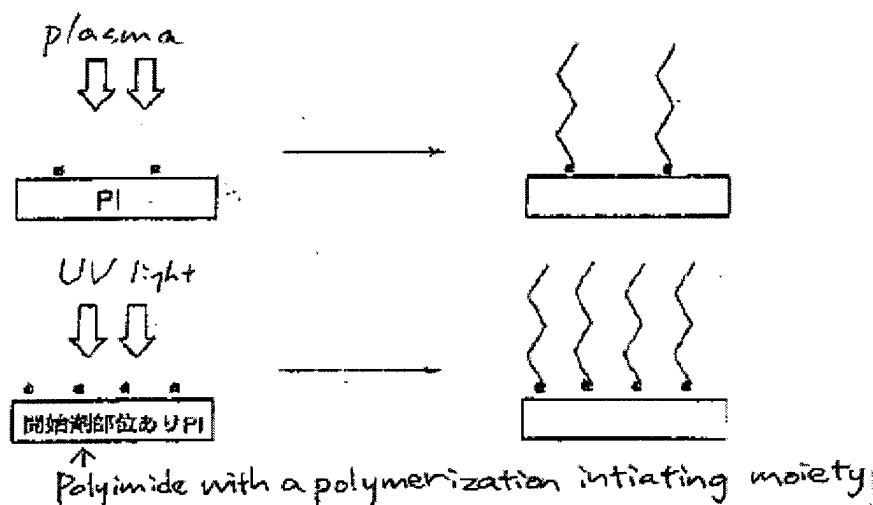
Applicants respectfully submit that, upon entry of the present Amendment, the §112 rejections of claims 8, 17 and 20 are overcome. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 8-10, 14, 17 and 20 is respectfully requested.

IV. Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

A. Claims 8-10, 14 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hiraoka *et al.* (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0009683 A1).

Initially, Applicants note that claim 8 has been amended to recite a specific polyimide, *i.e.*, the polyimide of formula (IV), and Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such a specific polyimide.

Further, Applicants submit that the presently claimed invention has been made based on the findings that by including a polyimide having a polymerization initiating moiety in the skeleton thereof into the surface of the substrate, active spots are readily generated by means of a simple apparatus such as a mercury lamp. As a result, adhesion between the substrate and a graft polymer layer can be improved, and a uniform metal film (conductive film) can be formed on the graft polymer layer adhered to the surface of the substrate which is not roughened. (See page 3, lines 3- 9 of the present specification and the image below.)



In contrast, the invention of Hiraoka (and Ryan cited below) relates to a method employing plasma graft polymerization, in which active spots are forced to be generated by irradiating the surface of a substrate with plasma. In such a method, a huge apparatus for plasma irradiation is necessary. Moreover, since the amount of a polymer that can be grafted is small due to a small amount of active spots, the obtained graft polymer cannot be tightly adhered to the substrate. Additionally, since plasma makes the surface of the substrate rough, a uniform metal film cannot be formed.

B. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hiraoka in view of Ryan *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,284,072 B1).

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 20 is patentable, at least by virtue of its dependence from claim 17, and the patentability of claim 17 as discussed above. Furthermore, Ryan does not cure the deficiencies of Hiraoka.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103 rejections.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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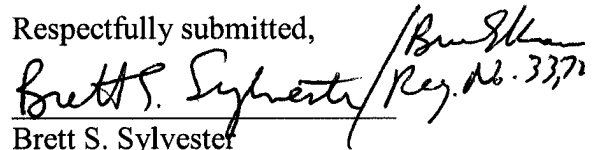
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CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: July 31, 2008

Respectfully submitted,


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